

January 23, 2005

Freedom Watch

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*Recon Soldiers
ready to bring
fight to enemy
Page 8*



Sgt. Frank Magni

Security

An Afghan National Army soldier from 1st Company, 3rd Kandak, 3rd Brigade, conducts a dismounted patrol on a busy street in Jalalabad. The unit deployed to Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan to maintain peace and stability in the region.

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Staff Sgt. Ryan Brophy, Long Range Surveillance Detachment assault team leader, fast ropes from a CH-53 Sea Stallion on Bagram Air Base Jan. 8. Brophy's team trains almost weekly on the fast rope insertion technique the team uses to quickly deploy into nearly inaccessible areas.

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Freedom Watch

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CFC-A Commander – Lt. Gen. David Barno
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'America's Battalion' Marines track Korangal Valley militants

Story and photos by
Marine Cpl. Rich Mattingly
3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment

KORANGAL VALLEY, Afghanistan — Marines of Company I, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, operate in remote areas in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Often these areas harbor cells of insurgents fighting against the Afghan government and Coalition forces.

Last month, Marines of "America's Battalion" entered the Korangal Valley in Konar province with the mission to capture or kill terrorists suspected of conducting attacks against Coalition forces.

"We get intelligence that lets us know where the bad guys are," explained 2nd Lt. Roy Bechtold, a Co. I platoon commander. "After we get grid locations, we work with our assets to plan the best way to go in and get them."

Korangal Valley is infamous for its inaccessibility and the numerous defeats suffered by the Soviets during their ill-fated campaign to control Afghanistan.

After vertically inserting via CH-47

Chinook helicopters, Co. I set into blocking positions along the roads and maneuvered into their positions.

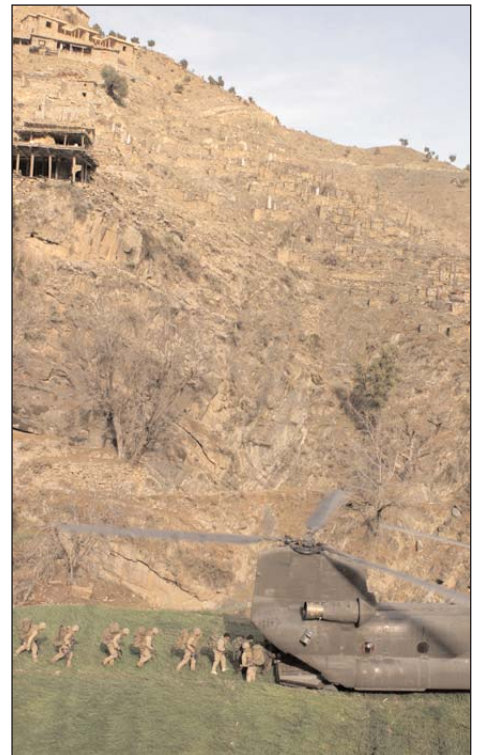
"The best way to come in is on foot or by air," said Bechtold. "We have to leave as small a signature as possible in order to not spook the guys we're looking for into running. If you come in with vehicles, they'll be long gone before you have a chance."

In the past, Marines have had difficulty getting into villages sympathetic to anti-Coalition militants without having the targets flee, said Bechtold.

As the Marines began conducting house-by-house searches, they knew they had limited time until their targets fled.

Up and down the bluffs and rocky faces that double as paths between the precariously stacked houses of the valley, the Marines and their Afghan National Army counterparts talked to village elders, shook hands and searched houses from top to bottom.

"It all goes back to attention to detail," said Sgt. Shawn Kelly, an acting platoon sergeant in Co. I. "You can't skip anything. It could be that one cache or that one guy



Infantrymen of Co. I, 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines, dash for a waiting CH-47 Chinook helicopter during their operation's extraction phase. The Marines use a vertical assault strategy to gain access to areas where ground movement would give away their element of surprise.

you miss that could help us stop an improvised explosive device emplacement or attack on Coalition forces."

The Marines' attentiveness paid off on the second day of the operation as Lance Cpl. Sean Decoursey, a Co. I rifleman, crawled through a small opening in a floor to find a cache of weapons and ammunition hidden under a pile of hay.

"I found the AK-47s and ammunition," he said, modest about the find. "I almost didn't look in that hole either. It looked like maybe it only went back about two or three feet, until I crawled in there."

The Marines confiscated the illegal weapons and ammunition. Their find was a good one, and after dealing with the cache, Co. I went right back to work in the villages.

"It feels really good to be here and to be getting something done," said Decoursey. "It feels like we're really making a difference when we can catch one of them."



Marine Sgt. Shawn Kelly, a squad leader with Co. I, speaks to a village elder in Korangal Valley about the whereabouts of a man his squad hopes to question. During the Marines' operation in the valley, they uncovered a weapons cache and the names of anti-Coalition militants.

Shindand Soldiers rush to aid pilots

Story by Sgt. Jeremy A. Clawson
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

SHINDAND AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Troops at Shindand Airfield charged into action the morning of Dec. 16 when an OH-58D Kiowa Warrior scout helicopter plunged to the desert floor four kilometers from the airfield tower.

One pilot climbed free; the other was pinned amidst mangled wreckage.

Pilots in the sister aircraft radioed in the crash information. Meanwhile, the flight operations Soldiers in the tower saw the dust and smoke from the crash site. The medics leapt into action as they heard the clamor on the radio.

A team of first responders bolted to their vehicles, rushing to secure the site and care for the pilots. The medics, force protection Soldiers, communications team, the fire department and the Downed Aircraft Recovery Team arrived soon after the crash. Two other Kiowa scouts, returning from another mission, arrived and provided initial site security.

The operations staff followed a pre-accident plan, coordinating the dispatch of the appropriate resources to the crash site in a timely manner.

Sgt. 1st Class Joe Belew, the TF Saber Communications chief, looked out the window of his communications' shop that morning to see a fire engine racing down the road. Knowing something was amiss, he went outside and saw a pilot running toward the aid station. He and his supervisor, Capt. James Jackson, the task force Signal officer, headed toward the crash site in their high mobility multi-purpose wheeled vehicle.

At the time of the crash, Master Sgt. Duane Detweiler, the Force Protection NCO in charge, was at the northern end of the airfield taking a break from improving the force protection fence line.

"I noticed a Kiowa Warrior execute a hard bank, and I knew something was up ... I looked to the northeast and saw a huge cloud of dust," said Detweiler. He and his partner, Staff Sgt. Michael Alexander, drove to the downed helicopter.

The wingman to the downed bird, another Kiowa scout helicopter, landed near the crash site and the pilots, 1st Lt. Angie Zugay and Chief Warrant Officer Brian Brummell, were on the scene when Detweiler, Alexander, Jackson and Belew arrived. One downed pilot, Chief Warrant Officer Scott Cowie, injured yet already clear of the wreckage, had attempted to lift the helicopter which pinned his copilot's

for Task Force Saber, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment.

Once those first ground troops arrived, everyone knew what had to be done.

The pilot, Chief Warrant Officer Timothy Lane, sat trapped in his cockpit seat under his inverted Kiowa helicopter, his left arm contorted and pinned behind the seat.

"It still just boggles my mind that it was a helicopter, it looked like a piece of (Soviet) junk ... then we realize there is a pilot trapped in there," said Jackson. "Our only concern was to get him free and to medical attention."

"(Lane) had his wits about him, but he

was upset, in a lot of pain and he wanted out of there pretty bad," said Belew. "No one panicked though."

So, as the rescue crew lifted in unison, Belew cut Lane's gear and webbing free.

"Then with one final heave we got him out," said Belew.

Belew did not expect to be part of a rescue operation. The 47-year-old veteran said he feels good about his role in the rescue.

"I would not trade that day for (anything). I would not want

to go back to the States ... I would want to be here to help with that crash," said Belew. "If one person from that group had been missing, we would not have gotten him out. It took everything we had."

The TF Saber Safety Officer, Chief Warrant Officer Jon Sturnick, conducted the safety investigation after the crash and commented on the speed and efficiency with which everyone responded.

Responders were on the scene within 15 minutes of the crash and both pilots sustained only minor injuries.

"You could not ask for a better response to a downed aircraft," said Sturnick.



Courtesy photo

Soldiers work to remove the wreckage of a downed OH-58D Kiowa Warrior scout helicopter after they extracted the pilots from the crashed helicopter near Shindand Airfield Dec. 16.

arm, to no avail.

When Belew, Detweiler and the others converged on the site, they first saw the sister ship, blades at a stand still, about 100 feet from some rubble, what looked like a pile of dirty scrap metal. Zugay stood up in the midst of the rubble waving her hands.

"That's when we knew (that the rubble) was the downed aircraft," said Detweiler.

"It was a bit frantic the first 30 to 40 seconds ... there was a lot of adrenaline and concern," said Belew.

"From the looks of the helicopter, the way it was crumpled like a tin can, we were certain no one could have survived," said Capt. Mike Anderson, flight surgeon

Army medics, Afghan doctors form partnership

Story and photo by
Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons
17th Public Affairs Detachment

GHAZNI PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM, Afghanistan — Mornings are busy at the Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team's aid station, as Afghan doctors and medics from Task Force 168 treat men, women and children from the surrounding community.

These medical professionals from different sides of the world work closely together to provide quality healthcare to the local populations.

"We examine patients from 8:30 until 11:00 in the morning Saturday through Thursday," said Dr. Hamdullah, an Afghan doctor who received his medical training at Kabul University Faculty of Medicine. "We see between 20 and 25 people a day. We distribute medications. Sometimes we refer chronic patients to the Ghazni Civil Hospital."

The treatment given to the clinic patients is some of the best in the area.

"Because we have medics helping us, we can conduct a better exam," he said. "We examine each patient carefully."

The doctors take time at the clinic to teach the Soldiers more about medicine.

"The medics are very helpful," said Hamdullah. "We teach them on compli-



Dr. Hamdullah observes Spc. Andrew Birzer as he evaluates Mohammed Naim at the Ghazni PRT clinic. The partnership is designed to teach local doctors how to better care for their patients at the local clinics.

cated and interesting cases. We also teach them about common illnesses in Afghanistan and illnesses that can reach epidemic proportions."

And the medics are eager to learn, said Dr. Wali Mohammed, who studied medicine at Jalalabad University. "Sometimes I teach the medics about the infectious diseases we see that are not in America. I also consult with the (physician assistant)

to diagnose some cases."

For the medics, this clinic has multiple benefits.

"The clinic's given me a lot of experience working with a lot of different patients with different problems," said Spc. Andrew Birzer, TF 168 medic. "It's built all of our clinical skills.

See Clinic, Page 14

Enduring Voices

What have you learned about yourself during this deployment?



**Republic of Korea
Cpl. Kang, Sungjoo**

ROK Eng. Group
"I have learned that there are a lot of similarities between the Coalition members."



Spc. Shane King

450th Military Police Co.
"I have learned that without the support of family and friends, this deployment would have been a lot harder than it has been."



Maj. Michael Pauling

Army Corps of Engineers
"I have learned that I am grateful for what the United States has to offer us."



Spc. Krystle Rogers

HHC, 367th Eng. Bn.
"I have learned how to stand up for myself and not let what other people think bother me."

Air Force officer renders aid in flight

CFC-A engineer treats Belgian aircrew member during Afghanistan flight

Story and photo by

Air Force 1st Lt. J. Elaine Hunnicutt
Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan
Public Affairs



Air Force 1st Lt. Glenn Cameron

KABUL COMPOUND, Afghanistan — Using his military experience and training, Air Force 1st Lt. Glenn Cameron rendered first aid to an injured Belgian airman during an in-flight emergency in November.

Cameron, a civil engineer with Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan, boarded the C-130 Hercules aircraft at Kabul International Airport en route to the Mazir-e-Sharif regional command construction site in northern Afghanistan.

During the flight, a Belgian air flight security crew member fell and sustained injuries including abrasions and a possible leg fracture.

Cameron saw the Belgian crew was gathered around its downed crew member behind a cargo pallet and knew something was wrong by the crew's tense behavior. The lieutenant grabbed his first-aid bag and headed for the back of the aircraft. Once in place, the crowd backed away and let him get to work.

"There were some language barriers, but I was able to determine the problem by her reaction to probing the injured area," said Cameron.

"They pointed to her knee, so I cut the leg of her uniform off to see what the damage was," said Cameron. "It was swollen up like a grapefruit and lacerated."

He then cleaned the injured areas and splinted the leg. The mission was canceled and the aircraft returned to Kabul International Airport where the airman was taken to the International Security Assistance Force compound hospital for medical care.

"We put her on a stretcher, and the crew strapped her in. I stayed with her throughout the rest of the flight," said Cameron. "She was squeezing my hand for the first 20 minutes or so and then finally settled down."

"I was impressed with Lieutenant Cameron's quick reaction – he saw there was a problem and didn't hesitate to take action,"

said Navy Lt. Cmdr. Theresa Thurlow, of the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan. "He is a qualified (emergency medical technician), and we were fortunate to have him with us."

The lieutenant was reluctant to share his experience and said he was just glad that he could help the Belgian airman.

"She was fine, smiling and talking. (She was) in great shape (when I last saw her)," he said.

Cameron is a civil engineer currently deployed to Afghanistan from the 45th Civil Engineer Squadron, Patrick Air Force Base, Fla. He is part of a team that oversees the construction of the Afghan National Army's Regional Command bases. These bases are being built by the Coalition to accommodate the 70,000-man army being recruited and trained in Afghanistan.

Religious Services Around the CJOA

Kabul

Sunday

0500 - Small Group Study
0630 - Traditional Prot.
1000 - Prot. Service - U.S. Emb.
1330 - Catholic Mass - Italian Emb.
1430 - Prot. Contemporary Praise
1530 - Small Group Study 201
1530 - Small Group Study 301

Tuesday

0930 - Chaplain's Call

Wednesday

1400 - Small Group Study 401

Friday

0830 - Latter-Day Saints
1330 - Small Group Study 101

Saturday

0930 - Chaplain's Call
1130 - Catholic Mass

Camp Phoenix

Sunday

0430 - Catholic (Italian)
0530 - Non-Denominational Prot.
1330 - Catholic (French)
1530 - Non-Denominational Prot.

Tuesday

1430 - Bible Study

Wednesday

1430 - Gospel Bible Study

Saturday

1430 - Gospel Worship Service

FOB Salerno

Sunday

0300 - Foundations Bible Class
0400 - Traditional Prot. Worship
0530 - Catholic Mass
0730 - Latter-Day Saints
0830 - Gospel Service
1400 - Inspirational Movie Night

Saturday

1500 - Contemporary Prot.

Bagram Air Base

Sunday

0400 - Liturgical Prot.
0530 - Roman Catholic Mass
0830 - Latter-Day Saints
0700 - Traditional Prot.
1115 - Korean Language Prot.
1300 - Gospel Service

Monday

1400 - Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Tuesday

1400 - Gospel Bible Study
1545 - Prot. Music Rehearsal

Wednesday

1600 - Catholic Music Rehearsal

Thursday

1430 - Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Friday

1430 - Jewish Prayer
1500 - Women's Bible Study

Saturday

0500 - Seventh-Day Adventist
1330 - Korean Choir Rehearsal
1515 - Roman Catholic Mass
1630 - Prot. Choir Rehearsal
Daily, Monday-Friday
0700 - Roman Catholic Mass
0745 - Noon-Day prayer

Kandahar Airfield

Sunday

0430 - Catholic Mass
0500 - Bible Study (325th FSB)
0630 - Prot. Worship
1330 - Gospel Choir Practice
1400 - Sunday School
1530 - Gospel Service

Monday

1300 - Gospel Choir Practice

Tuesday

1430 - Purpose-driven Life Study
1300 - Gospel Choir Practice
1430 - Praise Team Practice
1530 - Bible Study

Wednesday

1300 - Gospel Choir Practice
1430 - Praise Team Practice
1530 - Prot. Worship

Thursday

1430 - Praise Team Practice
1500 - Latter-Day Saints

Friday

0830 - Islamic Prayers
1330 - Jewish Sabbath Prayers

Saturday

0400 - Men's Breakfast
1300 - Catholic Mass
1430 - Praise Team Practice
Daily, Monday-Friday
0330 - Catholic Mass

* All times
Zulu/GMT

Tarin Kowt PRT

Operations begin before doors open

Story and photos by
Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE RIPLEY, Afghanistan — The efforts and impact of provincial reconstruction teams begin long before the sites officially open.

At Tarin Kowt PRT in southern Afghanistan, service

members and contractors alike are working hard to put the finishing touches on the structure, but they have been developing the infrastructure for several months.

The Tarin Kowt PRT has opened numerous schools in Oruzgan province since September. But the headquarters compound itself just officially opened in December.

"Tarin Kowt PRT was designated in May," said Maj. John A. Dayton, PRT executive officer and civil military operations director. "But before it could become operational, we had to establish several things."

These "things" included force protection, civil military operations, the Civil Affairs Team — Afghanistan, service support, and a military police advisory team, not to mention building the PRT facility.

"Working on the construction of the PRT is one of the best parts of my job," said Capt. James M. Laterza, Tarin Kowt PRT engineer. "I am able to actually see things happen."



Sgt. Thomas Hengeveld, Tarin Kowt PRT force protection, builds a table at the new PRT site in Afghanistan's Oruzgan province.



Two Afghan masons lay bricks in the final construction phase of the barracks at Tarin Kowt PRT.

Besides overseeing the construction of the PRT that brought it to its official opening, Laterza also helps in the selection of contractors to build projects the PRT helps coordinate.

The process in selecting these projects requires careful coordination.

"When we first arrived, we started meeting with the different ministers," said Dayton.

"All the projects we work help to empower and enable the ministers, and enact the national government's themes."

Another project the PRT has helped with that meets the goals of the Afghan national government is supporting the police force in Oruzgan. So far, the PRT has outfitted two

See PRT, Page 14

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Spc. Nelson Cisneros (left) from the Ghazni Provincial Reconstruction Team delivers blankets to the Ghazni orphanage during a snowstorm. The Soldiers from the PRT identified the need for blankets when they visited the orphanage on Christmas day to bring toys, clothing and other items to the children. One hundred blankets were donated during this visit.

*Photo by Maj. William McLean
Ghazni PRT*

If you have high quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to stumpc@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.





On the fast ropes to mission success

Story and photos by Spc. Chris Stump
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — After receiving the “go” hand signal, the Soldiers exited the CH-53 Sea Stallion through the “hellhole,” a trap door on the deck of the helicopter.

Sliding down a rope for more than 40 feet, the assault team of the 25th Infantry Division (Light)’s Long Range Surveillance Detachment made their way to the ground in just seconds.

With an enemy that uses Afghanistan’s vast, rugged terrain and tight urban areas to stage attacks and fade into the shadows, Coalition forces must be ready at a moment’s notice.

The LRSD assault team stands ready to deploy, engage and apprehend anti-Coalition militants, using several methods to quickly bring the fight to the enemy.



A LRSD Soldier fast ropes out of a Sea Stallion on Bagram Air Base during drills to maintain proficiency Jan. 8.

One of these methods is the fast rope insertion and extraction system — using a rope as a quick means to deliver the team from a helicopter into nearly inaccessible areas, such as mountain tops and small urban spaces, said Staff Sgt. Ryan Brophy, LRSD assault team leader.

“It’s one of our practiced techniques,” he said. “It works for getting into tight areas where the birds just can’t land.”

The team prefers to air land and dismount, but the unforgiving Afghan terrain doesn’t always allow for it. So the team trains on infiltrating by means of a rope hung from a hovering helicopter.

One at a time, the LRSD Soldiers grabbed the rope and slid out of the helicopter, maintaining positive control with just their hands and feet.

Making a safe descent is all about using the hands to apply the right amount of pressure on the rope to slow or speed up.

“It will get you into a 12 foot square,” said Brophy. “It’s perfect for getting onto a mountain where an insurgent may be, or getting onto a building where you can’t land.”

But it’s not as simple as just going out of a helicopter on a rope. It takes skill and training to build and maintain proficiency, so when the time comes, the mission can be accomplished.

“If you don’t train, you get complacent,” said Spc. Kevin Hartnett, LRSD assault team member.

“If you forget the basic skills, or let them deteriorate, you can get confused on the mission and people can get hurt,” he said.

With constant efforts to maintain proficiency, the LRSD Soldiers feel confident in their ability to get in and perform their mission when they are called.

“Knowing how to fast rope sets us apart from other units. Not everybody gets to do it,” said Spc. Lee Williams, LRSD assault team member.

“We are prepared,” he said. “Getting



Above: A LRSD assault team Soldier takes hold of the rope and makes his way out of the “hellhole” of a CH-53 Sea Stallion during fast rope insertion training on Bagram Air Base Jan. 8.

Top: A group of assault team members carry their fast rope across the Bagram flightline after each assault team member completed four successful descents.

out and practicing a mission essential skill like this is very important.”

Maintaining skills such as fast roping can mean the difference between mission success and mission failure.

“With this technique, in addition to the other techniques, we can get anywhere quickly,” said Brophy. “We can rope onto a mountain or into a village to do our job as fast as possible.”



Dr. (Col.) Steve Jones, TF Victory surgeon cell, looks in a child's ear at the Ministry of Women's Affairs Kindergarten Jan. 4.

TF Victory visits school, treats Afghan children

Story and photos by
Spc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

KABUL, Afghanistan — Throughout Afghanistan, the Soldiers of Task Force Victory's surgeon cell provide basic medical treatment to the people in remote cities and villages that would otherwise not receive the level of care they need.

When the surgeon cell traveled to Kabul in central Afghanistan Jan. 4-5, they provided medical treatment to children at the Ministry of Women's Affairs Kindergarten and the Allaudin Orphanage.

"It's good to be able to get out and care for the children," said Staff Sgt. Kim Pitts, 325th Combat Support Hospital dental hygienist. "They are the future of the country, and by showing them that good can come of a poor situation, we could have a huge influence on the future generations of Afghanistan."

Children were treated for various common childhood illnesses.

"Many of the children that

were seen at the kindergarten and the orphanage were fairly healthy," said Lt. Col. John Loose, Task Force Victory physician. "The main complaints were sore throats and ear aches. But otherwise, they seemed to be well taken care of and very healthy."

When the physicians talked with the office workers and mothers of the children at the kindergarten, they were impressed to find out that many of the children had doctors they see on a regular basis.

"We do our best with the

children," said Mari Abibi, office worker at the Ministry of Women's Affairs kindergarten. "But sometimes the doctors aren't able to provide medicine for the children. When the Soldiers come here and treat the children, we are able to receive medicine for their colds."

While receiving medicine is a large part of providing proper care to the children, many times the children have a cold that can be treated with over the counter medications that aren't always available to the people of Afghanistan.

"The children who come into the clinic are, for the most part, very healthy, but they have headaches, or need something for a scratchy throat or diaper rash," said Loose.

The directors of both the kindergarten and the orphanage were very happy to have the children looked at by an American doctor.

"When the children are healthy, they are happy and able to do more," said Dr. Mohammed Fawod, Allaudin Orphanage doctor. "It is wonderful that (they) have been able to come here to see the children. I have only been able to see the emergency cases, because I am low on medicine. But now all the children can be seen and treated."

The children treated are the future of this developing country and their health is vital to its success.

"If we can improve the life of even one child by coming out here and showing the children we care, then we have accomplished a small part of our mission," said Pitts.



Spc. Jasmine Smith, TF Victory, administers a dose of dewormer to Seyar, 6, who is unable to walk and has diminished vision because of the water on his brain.

Fill 'er up: *Fuelers keep helicopters flying longer in support of OEF missions*

Story and photos by
Sgt. Frank Magni
17th Public Affairs Detachment

HERAT CITY, Afghanistan — For every aircraft used in Operation Enduring Freedom, there are a myriad of specialists on the ground working to keep every one of them in the air.

Petroleum supply specialists, or ground fuelers, are one group essential to the aviation mission. This group plays an integral role in not only keeping aircraft safe, but also boosting their range to better support the ground forces by manning forward fueling points.

One such refueling team from Troop D, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, is now temporarily stationed at the Afghan National Army Regional Corps Assistance Group base just outside Herat city in western Afghanistan. Here, they support flights as they arrive from throughout Regional Command West.

While a majority of the 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav Rgt., is stationed in Herat province, the refueler's isolation is not an unusual situation. In fact, the more they move and the closer they stay to forward operations, the faster the mission moves.

Working in small teams ranging from two to five people, the fuelers are constantly on the go.

"Wherever the birds need to be, we are there," said Sgt. Robert Pulliam, Trp. D, squad leader.



Spc. Joel Williams, Troop D, 3rd Sqdn., 4th Cav. Rgt., visually inspects the fuel from his truck during a daily safety check to ensure vehicles and aircraft are receiving clean, safe fuel.

Since being deployed to Afghanistan, Pulliam's squad has set up more than 15 forward arming and refueling points in Regional Commands south and west.

"We are at most locations less than 30 days," said Pulliam.

While he and his team are constantly moving, Pulliam said one of the most important elements to safely providing fuel in remote locations is following all the necessary preventive maintenance checks and services on the fueling equipment.

Along with the equipment PMCS, the team follows strict fuel testing standards.

"We have to be able to quickly refuel aircraft at a moment's notice," said Spc. Joel Williams, Trp. D, petroleum supply specialist. "To do that, (fueling) equipment must always be working and delivering safe fuel."

When aircraft aren't coming to the FARP, the team conducts daily checks on equipment and

runs fuel tests, said Williams.

"Whether birds are flying or not, we stay prepared, no matter what," he said.

On each petroleum team, much time is devoted to preparation. But safety is also a major concern when it's time to refuel.

"Pumping fuel into aircraft is much more dangerous than pumping fuel into trucks," said Pulliam.

While the fuel is being pumped into an aircraft, everyone from the air crew to the fuelers must stay acutely aware of all safety hazards.

One of the biggest hazards during refueling is a "runaway hose," or a hose that slips out of place and spills fuel.

Another hazard is the possibility of fire caused by static electricity from the helicopter's rotors.

Regardless of the hazard, attentive air crews and ground fuelers can drastically reduce the risk by following safety procedures.

"If we don't follow safety procedures the right way, there is a good chance something bad could happen," said Pulliam.

Although running a FARP in support of Operation Enduring Freedom can be demanding, there are a lot of rewards, said Pulliam.

"We are an essential part of the mission," he said. "It feels real good to keep the birds flying, because they are so necessary to the mission."



Spc. Joel Williams and Sgt. Robert Pulliam, both of Troop D, check a fuel line running from a truck to a landing point at a FARP just outside Herat city.

Carpenters improve forward conditions

Story and photo by
Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen
Combined Task Force Thunder
Public Affairs

FIRE BASE WAZA KHWA, Afghanistan — From sun up to sun down, the sounds of power tools and hammers pounding nails fill the air at Firebase Waza Khwa in southern Paktika province.

Just about anything that can be made of wood — shelves, tables, guard towers and generator shelters — are produced daily by two Soldiers from the 367th Engineer Battalion, a U.S. Army Reserve unit from Brainerd, Minn.

Staff Sgt. Brian Damon and Spc. David Baker are based out of Bagram Air Base with the majority of their unit, but were at the remote Firebase Waza Khwa working for a few weeks in late December and early January.

The conditions at the base



Spc. David Baker, a carpenter from the 367th Eng. Bn., uses a tape measure to check the dimensions on a new guard tower at Firebase Waza Khwa.

were much more spartan than what they're used to at Bagram, but Damon and Baker did their part to help make life better for the Soldiers who call this place home.

Damon said he's glad he can help improve the quality of

life for the Soldiers here.

"It makes me feel real good ... to know that I'm here to help make sure the Soldiers are comfortable and they're living a little easier," he said.

Damon said he enjoys working with wood and sees this mission as a break from

his usual job as a heavy equipment operator and supervisor.

"It's kind of a hobby of mine to do some carpentry on the side at home, so to do this is fun," he said.

For Baker, it was the second time during the deployment he came to a forward operating base for this type of mission.

He said it's gratifying to stand back at the end of the day and see the Soldiers using the things he and Damon built for them.

"It's nice that I can help out in some way," said Baker. "Even though I'm not an infantryman, I might be able to help make their day when they get back from a patrol or something."

"Hopefully everybody has a nice meal," he said. "They can sit down and eat instead of sitting on their bunk or looking for a chair."

Dari/Pashto phrase of the week



Dari

What is your name?

Esme shuma chist

(Ess-may shoo-mah chest)

Pashto

What is your name?

Tasu num su da

(Tasoo noom suh dah)

Afghan cultural tidbit

A burka is a loose garment many Muslim women wear in public. In the Muslim faith, burkas are worn to hide a woman's beauty. While beauty is valued, many believe that it is not to be showcased to the public. Women wear the burkas so others will not judge them based on their looks.



Above: ROK Capt. Cho, Soo Hyun examines an Afghan girl's mouth. The girl visited the hospital to receive treatment for a severe cold. Right: ROK Capt. Kwon, Tung Sil, hospital chief nurse, bandages an Afghan girl's foot.



ROK hospital lends support to Afghans

Coalition doctors treat more than 200 patients each day

Story and photos by
Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl
17th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — More than 200 Afghans visit the Republic of Korea Hospital on Bagram Air Base almost every day, many of them malnourished.

Their sunken cheeks, hollow eyes, and often distended stomachs crave the nutrients a body needs to survive and the staff of the ROK 924th Medical Support Group is there to provide as much assistance as they can.

"It's heart-breaking, seeing the children who come in to our hospital," said ROK Lt. Col. Yoon, Sang Rok, 924th MSG commander.

The children often come in to pick up medicine for their parents or grandparents, he explained. But more often than not, they also require medical attention, which the hospital staff is more than happy to provide.

"It's a small thing — being able to help," said ROK Cpl. Choi, Yung Tae, a pharmacy medic. "I am able to give them vitamins, which help replace some of the nutrients they are lacking."

Decades of war have reduced Afghanistan's agricultural capability, limiting the ability of the Afghans to maintain healthy diets.

"Many of the people here are suffering from malnutrition, environmental effects and unhealthy lifestyles," said Yoon. "These things make for a lot of medical problems, especially in the children."

Afflictions like anemia and tuberculosis plague nearly every patient the ROK doctors, nurses and medics treat, and there are often broken limbs or external injuries. But the staff is often limited in the treatment they can provide.

"People will travel on foot or bicycle to come to our hospital," said Yoon. "They come from as far away as Kabul and Jalalabad to get treatment."

"But by the time they get here, it is often too late for us to be able to completely heal them," said ROK Capt. Cho, Soohyun, an orthopedic doctor.

To combat this problem, the group also participates in cooperative medical assistance missions, which allow them to get into the villages and reach the people, instead of waiting for the people to come to them. But the patients who come to Bagram are their main focus.

As a Level 1 hospital, the 924th MSG has a very specific role in Operation Enduring Freedom. The hospital has the ability to treat colds, flus, broken bones and other minor injuries. Patients whose ailments fall beyond the scope of Level 1

treatment are transported by the ROK hospital staff to either the Egyptian Hospital on Bagram, which is a Level 2 facility, or to the 325th Combat Support Hospital, which is a Level 3 hospital.

For the Korean medical personnel, they are happy to continue helping any patients they can. By distributing vitamins and other natural supplements, like iron pills, they know they are playing a significant role in improving the lifestyle for Afghans.

"I feel joy every time I see a patient who is getting better, especially the babies and children," said ROK Capt. Kwon, Tung Sil, hospital chief nurse. "I am doing my best to help them, and I will continue to care for our patients and hope we can continue to support this effort."



Afghan children wait for treatment at the Korean Hospital on Bagram Air Base. Many of the children who visit the hospital are malnourished or have been ill for long periods of time.

Identity theft: Prevent it with awareness

Safeguarding the Coalition

Story by Sgt. Frank Magni
17th Public Affairs Detachment

AFGHANISTAN — Unsuspecting members of the Coalition could be targets right now and not even know it. The threat — identity theft.

With just a few pieces of information, thieves can easily swindle any person out of financial stability and even privacy.

But with proper preventive steps and financial awareness, Coalition members can avoid identity theft and its anguishing effects.

Identity theft is when an unauthorized individual makes use of another's personal data to profit at the victim's expense. Obtaining information like social security, bank account and credit card numbers, criminals can wreak considerable damage in a short amount of time.

Schemes come in all shapes and sizes. Sometimes thieves will take advantage of existing accounts or open new ones in the victim's name — all to unscrupulously obtain money, goods or services.

Identity theft comes in various forms. Thieves can obtain information from eavesdropping on phone calls or rummaging through trash bins to obtain discarded banking or credit card statements or receipts.

Identity theft also comes in sophisticated methods on the Internet and unique military forms.

While anyone can potentially be a victim, those deployed can be especially susceptible to identity theft, said Capt. Duane Kees, Task Force Longhorn command judge advocate.

Being isolated from timely mail while concentrating on the duties of Operation Enduring Freedom can give potential thieves months to control finances unbeknownst to the victim, said Kees.

But in Kees' experience in dealing with many identity theft cases, most people's first impulse can be the most harmful — ignoring the situation.

"You are responsible for the debt," said

Kees. "Whether it is a case of identity theft or not, you must deal with the problem immediately."

He warns that in many cases, debt — whether it is accrued through an identity being stolen or not — can even affect a military career.

"It is a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice to not pay debts," said Kees.

But just paying the debt isn't the answer either.

"What hurts people by finding out about identity theft in a combat zone is, it is very hard to get things done," said Kees. "Acting quickly is critical, because of the time difference and delayed mail."

Dealing with unauthorized charges to credit cards or bank accounts in a matter of weeks instead of months can mean the

Great care should be taken to protect credit card, and all other sensitive information, to avoid the possibility of identity theft.



difference between the bank or credit card companies being responsible and the burden of proof being on the victim.

Although there are many factors against service members discovering identity theft in a combat zone, it can all be fixed.

In fact, Kees has been successful in helping many Soldiers in the last nine months.

"It is an uphill battle, but it can be fixed," said Kees.

Because it is such a difficult situation to deal with, Kees highly recommends a service member take multiple steps to not only detect identity theft early, but prevent it all together.

"The number one thing a service mem-

ber can do is to check their credit card and bank statement meticulously," he said.

With mail sometimes taking more than a month to reach personnel, Kees suggested people try different methods to deal with finances in Afghanistan.

"If you have a spouse or parent you can trust, it is best if they take a look at statements for you," he said.

Checking statements on the Internet can be the answer for some.

But with the Internet being one of the most dangerous places in terms identity theft, Spc. Dustin Celko, Task Force Longhorn computer information system operator, makes certain recommendations, especially to those in deployed locations.

All passwords should be closely guarded — especially passwords that access government computer networks.

"If you don't have proof another person logged on under your name you can be held accountable for what they do," said Celko.

By keeping passwords to themselves and not writing them down, people can protect themselves, he said.

One other way Coalition members can protect themselves is to ensure that they log off all accounts on shared computers in places like Morale, Welfare and Recreation centers.

The best advice both Kees and Celko give to everyone is to closely guard all personal pieces of information.

Even a leaked social security number can be harmful, said Kees.

His ultimate piece of advice is to burn or shred everything from bank account and credit card statements to address labels and military documents not being kept in secure records.

Celko's advice is for people to be wary of where they give out credit card and debit card numbers on the Internet.

Although service members can avoid identity theft by taking precautions, there are circumstances that can affect anyone no matter what. Identity theft is a reality for anyone with bank accounts or credit cards.

But with awareness and preventive steps, the negative effects of identity theft can be made right — as long as it is not ignored.

Clinic: Coalition partners team up for increased care

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"But more than just helping me with my medical experience," he said. "I've worked with a lot of the locals and realized that we all have the same type of problems. It eliminates a lot of the popular stereotypes. We are all human and have the same kind of illness."

The clinic is free to anyone who wishes to visit and receive treatment.

"The clinic helps a lot of people," said Birzer. "Because a lot of them are getting medicine that they might not be able to afford in town and are able to see doctors for no charge."

"The Afghan people are poor and medical treatment is expensive," said Mohammed Naim, a patient at the clinic being treated for kidney stones and a rare skin disorder. "Having a clinic that is free to the people helps. The PRT clinic gives good treatment."

The doctors working in the clinic give outstanding care to the patients. Hamdullah and Wali are good doctors, said Birzer. They are Afghan-trained and very well-versed in Western medicine.

This clinic is good for the people who live near the PRT in the village, said Hamdullah. Rather than traveling all the way into the city, they can just walk to the clinic.

The quality of the care is higher than at the local doctors in the bazaar, said Hamdullah.

"The bazaar doesn't have all the medicine that we do," he said. "Also, we only



Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons

Dr. Hamdullah examines a female patient at the Ghazni PRT clinic.

use medicine from registered companies so we know it's good. In the bazaar, you don't always know if you are getting good medication."

When a patient comes into the clinic, the doctors get a brief history of their health, said Wali.

"The private doctors around here don't do as thorough examinations as we do here," said Hamdullah. "They don't have all the necessary equipment."

The clinic is one way the doctors, medics and other PRT personnel are reaching out to the people in Ghazni.

"The clinic is important to the community," said Wali.

There has been an increase in the number of women seen since the clinic opened seven months ago.

"Back then, we only had one or two females," he said. "Now we treat five to ten females a day, because the people have found out about the clinic and they trust us."

The clinic doesn't help just the locals, said Birzer. It's also helping the Coalition forces operating in this area.

"It helps because (anti-Coalition militants) can't come into the area and convince the people that we are bad and not here for them, because they have already seen what we do for them," he said.

The relationship between the PRT and the community is great, said Wali. If the people can see the Soldiers are here to help them, they will be more receptive to the Coalition.

Helping the people is a great thing, said Birzer.

"It exposes the people to the Coalition in a different way than just military, with patrols and things like that," he said.

"We show them the health care part of our job. It shows the humanitarian side of the military."

PRT: Missions continue throughout construction

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of the district's police forces with both uniforms and vehicles.

All of these projects come as a result of coordination with local leaders.

"Our team goes out and conducts assessments," said Staff Sgt. David R. Henry, Tarin Kowt PRT, CAT-A team noncommissioned officer in charge. "The biggest thing I've noticed since we started working here is that the governments are more able to identify projects that will have a long-lasting impact."

This change is due to the relationships members of the PRT have been developing for several months.

So while the PRT is new, the relationships its members have built with the Afghans are well-founded.



Sgt. Stephanie L. Carl

Afghan contractors put the finishing touches on the barracks at Tarin Kowt PRT in southern Afghanistan's Oruzgan province.

French team trains Afghan intel soldiers

Story and photo by

Lt. Col. Susan H. Meisner

Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan — Twenty-three graduates of Afghanistan's first French-run intelligence class are ready to apply their new skills.

A French Mobile Training Team from the French Defense Intelligence Agency deployed to Kabul in November and December to complete the course at the ANA Command and General Staff College. Under the guidance of the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan, the four-week course covered a variety of intelligence subjects.

Students attended classes in the morning and worked at their Afghan Ministry of Defense positions in the afternoon.

OMC-A mentors and Military Professional Resources Incorporated contractors Gail Nelson and Craig Balzer facilitated the class, coordinating with the French Embassy for the French team's visit. Upon arriving in Kabul, the French team arranged for translations of lesson plans and handouts from French into Dari.

French Lt. Col. Thierry de Seguins and French Capt. Chris Le Bris were in charge of training the 23 senior officers of the Chief of Intelligence of the General Staff.

They had nothing but praise for their students.

"Our students were very experienced," said de Seguins. "For more than 50 percent of them, intelligence was their career and they were graduates of the Tashkent Intelligence School in Uzbekistan. Most of the others were mujahedeen who had

learned in the field.

"They were hard workers and thirsty to learn. This was a new stage for them, to learn and share experiences with Western people."

"It was difficult to get them to share information (amongst themselves) at first," said Le Bris. But during exercises and breaks, the group mingled, got to know each other better and developed good working relationships.

The course covered writing intelligence memorandums and reports, counterintelligence issues, topography, the intelligence environment, operations intelligence, intelligence processes and tactics.

Gen. Khaliq, Chief of Intelligence of the General Staff and a class member, also requested training on intelligence ethics. Additionally, guest speakers lectured on civil military cooperation and public information.

The final exercise tested their knowledge at the strategic level. Instructors outlined a terrorist scenario in which teams of students had to write a collection plan and prepare documentation and biographies of key leaders in the subversive movement. They had to react quickly and decisively to the scenario, which reflected current events.

By all accounts, the final exercise was a success.

"The senior officers worked very well at the strategic level," said de Seguins.



French Capt. Chris Le Bris assists a student during topography instruction at the French Mobile Training Team's intelligence class.

A view shared by both French instructors. "They had good reactions to the scenario and acted quickly," said Le Bris.

Good reactions to good training. "We received high-quality training here," said Afghan Col. Haji Zalmai, chief of technical intelligence at the Ministry of Defense.

"We studied security issues, short-term issues, and we learned essential and necessary things for our daily work," said Afghan Col. Shoukatullah Jalal, Chief of Order of Battle at the MoD.

"We practiced the training as a practical drill with the help of our French instructors," said Jalal. "They did everything we needed for learning, and their kindness made us stick to it and study hard."

"Before, we had some deficiencies in knowledge and experience, but now we have received high-quality training," said Zalmai.

Letters to the Editor

The *Freedom Watch* would like to publish your opinions on topics of importance and interest to those serving in OEF.

Please send your thoughts in letter form to the editor. All letters e-mailed must include full name, unit, address and, when possible, telephone number. We will not print anonymous letters. Please limit all letters to 200 words or less.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, clarity and decorum.

Please avoid implying criticism of U.S. or DoD policies and programs, advocating or disputing specific political, diplomatic or legislative matters, or implying criticism of host nation or host nation sensitivities.

Please send your letters to: stumpc@baf.afgn.army.mil

We look forward to hearing from you!

OEF "Values" Essay Contest

Personnel in Afghanistan are invited to participate in the Operation Enduring Freedom bi-monthly "Values" Essay Contest sponsored by CJTF-76.

The current value is "**Loyalty.**"

Rules

- ☐ Essays should include the definition of the featured value and your own experience(s) that reinforce this value
- ☐ Essays will be at least one and no more than two pages (typed/neatly printed and double-spaced)
- ☐ Please include a cover page with Title, Author's Name, Supervisor's Name, Unit/Organization, Phone Number and e-mail address if available
- ☐ Do not put name directly on essay
- ☐ Submit essays to EO Adviser nearest your location, via e-mail or hard copy by Jan. 25.

The winning essay writer will receive a CJTF-76 Commanding General's Certificate of Achievement and other prizes to be announced. The essay will also be published in a future issue of the *Freedom Watch*, and in the bi-monthly EO Update.

EO is also looking for E-7s and above to help review essay submissions and select the winning essay.

Call the Bagram EO Senior Adviser at DSN 318-231-3021 for more information.

Freedom Watch

January 23, 2005

Fearless